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## BOOK REVIEWS

THE LAW AND CUSTOM OF THE CONSTITUTION. By Sir William Anson. Fifth Edition, by Maurice L. Gwyer. Volume I, Parliament. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1922. Pp. xxv, 443.

In 1886 the late Sir William Anson published the first part of his *Law and Custom of the Constitution*. This volume, dealing primarily with the origin, structure, and workings of Parliament, was supplemented in 1892 by a second (subsequently re-issued in two volumes) devoted to the Crown. Almost immediately the work came to be recognized as the standard for students desiring a knowledge of the fabric and machinery of the existing British government, with a brief historical explanation of how they came to be—for the author was strongly of the opinion that the law and constitution, certainly of his own country, could not be disassociated from history. Especially interested, however, in present organization and practice, Sir William, during his lifetime, sought to keep his treatise abreast of the times in successive editions. The fifth edition of Part I, carried to February, 1922, has been very competently done by Mr. Maurice L. Gwyer. While interfering as little as possible "with the framework and scheme of the book as planned by the author," he has altered the text somewhat in the light of the researches presented in Baldwin's *King's Council*, Pollard's *Evolution of Parliament*, and McIlwain's (erroneously cited as M'Ilwaine) *High Court of Parliament*. Also the editor has embodied the recent changes in the Statute Law, notably the Representation of the People Act of 1918 and the legislation relating to Ireland; indeed, two appendices are devoted to the Northern Ireland Parliament and Irish Free State Agreement, respectively. Such changes as the World War has brought about in parliamentary custom and practice have been carefully considered, though, as is pointed out, changes due to that cause have been singularly few. It would be but attempting "to add another hue unto the rainbow" to undertake once more systematically to criticise a classic that has so worthily stood the test of time. However, the reviewer might point out that the author is inclined to attribute more importance to the measure of 1322 (pages 301, 332) than most modern scholars admit; that Pollard has, at least, shaken seriously the formerly accepted notions regarding the three estates (page 146); and that the motives for Mr. (now Lord) Balfour's resignation in 1905, as stated (page 27), are hardly adequate. In view of the part which lawyers have played in legislation time out of mind, it is interesting to note that the Act of 1372, providing that "no man of law following business in the King's Court \* \* \* be returned nor accepted knight of the shire," though long forgotten, was not repealed till 1871.

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